

THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER

NEWS of ENNIS and the MADISON VALLEY, MONTANA for JANUARY 2016



Trout live in nice neighborhoods



➤ **MADISON VALLEY “HAPPENINGS”** → January was a busy month with lots of winter activities. Kids learned how to ice fish during the **Kids-N-Snow Weekend** in West Yellowstone MT. West also hosted **Sled Dog Races** with professional mushers from all over the world and a **National Ice Fishing Tournament** at Hebgen Lake. → There was a **Rancher Workshop** in Harrison for those wanting to learn more about crops, soil and livestock. → The Elling House & Humanities Center in Virginia City hosted a **Chautauqua**. → High school students from all over Montana converged on Ennis for the **State Speech/Drama/Debate Meet** hosted by **Ennis H.S.**, changing the demographics dramatically, for a few days. → The new gunsmith in town at **Braggin’ Rights Guns**, held a Conceal Carry Class for a full house (*mostly women!*). We learned the ethical, moral and legal consequences of being involved in a shoot. → The **Ennis Café** is back in business, with the original owners and signs back up! Stop in and say hi!



➤ **COMING FEBRUARY HAPPENINGS** → Virginia City will be holding their **Winter Classic Ice Hockey Tournament**, February 6 – 7. → **The Blue Moon Saloon** in Cameron will be reopening on Feb. 5th, under new ownership, but without Jerry Clark and his one-man band. → **The McAllister Inn** will be closing for a winter break, after their Valentine’s Day dinner. → More firearms classes and more will soon be offered from ← ← **Braggin’ Rights Guns**. → **The Madison Valley Public Library**, the **Madison Valley Aquatic Center** and **The Madison River Foundation** are sponsoring a **Soup Dinner** to invest in the children of Ennis, at the Senior Center on February 18th.



➤ **MONTANA NEWS** → The regular session of the **Montana legislature** adjourned on December 31st, 2015, not to convene again until January 2017, as they are only in regular session each odd-numbered year. Montana is only one of four states (MT, NV, ND & TX) that does not meet annually. The legislators go back home to their real lives and businesses! That might be a good plan for Washington!

➤ **FISHING REPORT** → MT FWP reported in their 2015 Annual Report that even after a drop in 2015, there are still historic levels of large fish in the Madison River. They are also re-introducing arctic grayling into the Madison (*they were there before the browns & rainbows*). → Covering over 94 million acres, Montana offers some of the best **ice fishing** in the country! Check out 6 great spots at:

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<http://www.wideopenspaces.com/6-superb-places-ice-fishing-montana/>. → But, if ice fishing doesn't do it for you, check out **The Tackle Shop's Madison River Fishing Report for February 1, 2016**. February is here and we are stuck in the dead of winter on the Madison River. The first truly spring like days are still over a month away in March and the light at the end of the tunnel we are looking for as fly fisherman does not feel like



it is getting closer. Being the shortest month of the year February always feels like it takes the longest. We know great fishing is on the horizon but we must muddle through this month to get there. If you need to scratch the itch and get your February fish there are definitely opportunities to do that. If you're looking for the easy way to get hooked up, tie on the old bobber and some weight. Creatures like san juan worms, eggs, rubber legs, zebra midges and serendipities are getting the job done. Remember the water is cold and the fish lethargic so you need to get your offering down and in their

face. If you're not bouncing the bottom on every other cast you are not deep enough. Also **concentrate on the deepest and slowest water in the river**. The bouncy riffles that are so fun to fish in the summer are devoid of fish this time of year. Keep it in the deep slow stuff and you will be rewarded. If you're looking for the magical dry fly winter bite you can still accomplish your goal. **Look for days when the wind is down and the temps are above freezing**. Our best midge winter dry fly fishing has been either in the Bear Trap Canyon or between Reynolds Pass and Lyons Bridge. Look for risers mid afternoon in the slicks behind rocks and on the inside of turns. Rise forms are slight so keep a keen look out. If you spot risers, usually a buzz ball, Griffiths gnat, or para midge will take them. Keep it on 4X so the drift is right and you will be rewarded. Streamer guys must keep two things in mind. **Slow and deep**. Most of the usually sculpins and other flashy streamers will take winter fish but they need to be in the zone. The zone now is deep. Fish are not going to move 2 feet to eat a streamer like they did in October. Swinging streamers in the honey holes will produce some big fish. Stop by the store for a free cup of coffee, to chat about fishing or check out some of the great new stuff that is starting to arrive. **John Way**

Check out other fishing reports at:

- ✚ Madison River Fishing Company at <http://www.mrfc.com/MadisonRiverMontanaFishing/MadisonRiverReport.aspx>.
- ✚ Dan Delekta at <http://beartoothflyfishing.com/flyfishingreports/uppermadisonriver.htm>.
- ✚ The Madison Valley Ranch at <http://www.madisonvalleyranch.com/blog/>
- ✚ Joe Dilschneider's Montana Trout Stalkers at <http://www.montanatrout.com/>
- ✚ Yellowstone Fly Fishing at <http://www.yellowstoneflyfishing.com/madisonreport.htm>.

➤ **HUNTING** → Yellowstone National Park plans to cull 900 **bison**, using public and tribal hunting and trapping during February and March. → **Moose** numbers are up in Madison County, according to MT FWP. Only 3 antlered and 3 antlerless permits have been offered for many years, but they may now increase that number. → And if you don't feel like actually hunting, you can take advantage of **road kill** in Montana. If you happen to come upon a fresh kill on or near the highway, you can take the animal and then notify FWP. In fact, there is a nifty **Montana Road Kill Kit** you can keep in your car so you'll be ready with everything you need (except a knife or axe) to harvest an animal killed on the road. It was invented by our new agent, Ron Gay, after seeing so many animals go to waste. **Just \$24!** Call our office for more information.



➤ **WEATHER** → January was so mild, we wondered if winter was over, already! But that was probably just a tease. We've had lots of sunshine with clear, blue skies above sparkling snow. Picture perfect. The recorded **January** daytime high in Ennis was **35°** and daytime low of **16°**. The nighttime high was **22°** and nighttime low was **-5°**. Precipitation was quite low for January.

➤ **REAL ESTATE TIPS** → **THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS OF OVERPRICING.**

http://www.trulia.com/guide/home_selling/home_selling_strategies/the_seven_deadly_sins_of_overpricing/. "We can always go down, but we can't go up." If you're selling your home, this statement has probably crossed your lips at least once. But when it comes to setting a pricing strategy for your home, is



it a good idea to start high and work your way down, especially in a market flooded with inventory? Probably not, as most experts would advise that the best way to increase your odds of a successful sale is to price your home at fair market value. But, as logical as this advice sounds, for many sellers it is still tempting to tack a few percentage points onto the price to "leave room to negotiate." Trulia says to avoid this temptation, take a look at the seven deadly sins of overpricing:

1. **Appraisal problems** - Even if you do find a buyer willing to pay an inflated price, the fact is over 90% of buyers use some kind of financing to pay for their home purchase. If your home won't appraise for the purchase price, the sale will likely fail.
2. **No showings** - Today's sophisticated home buyers are well educated about the real estate market. If your home is overpriced they won't bother looking at it, let alone make you an offer.
3. **Branding problems** - When a new listing hits the market, every agent quickly checks the property out to see if it's a good fit for their clients. If your home is branded as "overpriced", reigniting interest may take drastic measures.
4. **Selling the competition** - Overpricing helps your competition. How? You make their lower prices seem like bargains. Nothing is worse than watching your neighbors put up a sold sign.
5. **Stagnation** - The longer your home sits on the market, the more likely it is to become stigmatized or stale. Have you ever seen a property that seems to be perpetually for sale? Do you ever wonder - What's wrong with that house?
6. **Tougher negotiations** - Buyers who do view your home may negotiate harder because the home has been on the market for a longer period of time and because it is overpriced compared to the competition.
7. **Lost opportunities** - You will lose a percentage of buyers who are outside of your price point. These are buyers who are looking in the price range that the home will eventually sell for but don't see the home because the price is above their pre-set budget.

One popular myth is that a great marketing plan will overcome a pricing problem. Nope - spending a zillion dollars on advertising, internet ads, and television spots won't motivate buyers to pay you more than the home is worth. Another myth is the assumption that a buyer will see your home, fall in love, and write you a check so the competition doesn't matter. Wrong. Buyers don't look at homes in isolation. Most look at 10-15 homes before making a buying decision. Because of this, setting a competitive price relative to the competition is an essential component to a successful marketing strategy.

➤ **FIND A HOME FOR YOUR SOUL ... Featured Property of the Month** → A Place to Build your dream home or cabin. Lot 228, on Spur Trail in Shining Mountains I, is a 6.76 acre lot, perched up among the trees with outstanding views of the valley and mountains. It has good access and end-of-the-road privacy, several good building sites, a well and power to the adjoining lot. This property is very affordable at **\$69,000**. MLS # 204657.



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➤ **CURRENT REAL ESTATE MARKET** → WASHINGTON (January 28, 2016) — Pending home sales were mostly unchanged in December, but inched forward slightly, fueled by a large increase in the Northeast that outpaced declines in the other three major regions, according to the National Association of Realtors®. The Pending Home Sales Index (PHSI) a forward-looking indicator based on contract signings, crawled 0.1 % to 106.8 in December from a downwardly revised 106.7 in November and is now 4.2 % above December 2014 (102.5). The index has increased year-over-year for 16 consecutive months. Lawrence Yun, NAR chief economist, says contract activity closed out the year on stable footing but lost some momentum, except for in the Northeast. "Warmer than average weather and more favorable inventory conditions compared to other parts of the country encouraged more households in the Northeast to make the decision to buy last month," he said. "Overall, while sustained job creation is spurring more activity compared to a year ago, the ability to find available homes in affordable price ranges is difficult for buyers in many job creating areas. With homebuilding still grossly inadequate, steady price appreciation and tight supply conditions aren't going away any time soon." According to Yun, although healthy labor market conditions will persuade more households to buy, its possible overall demand could be somewhat curtailed in coming months. The stock market's sizeable losses since the start of the year and the effect slowing manufacturing activity is having in some areas — especially in the energy sector — could cause some to hold off on buying. "The silver lining from the market turmoil in recent weeks is the fact that mortgage rates have slightly declined," says Yun. "Buyers looking to close on a home before the spring buying season begins may be rewarded with a mortgage rate at or below 4 percent."

Existing homes sales this year are forecast to be around 5.34 million, an increase of 1.5 percent from 2015. The national median existing-home price for all of this year is expected to increase between 4 and 5 percent. In 2015, existing-home sales increased 6.5 percent and prices rose 6.8 percent. Rents — which have far outpaced wages in recent years — are expected to slightly slow to 3.3 percent growth in 2016 from 3.6 percent a year ago. Multifamily housing starts are expected to reach 420,000 units this year, the highest level since 1987. The PHSI in the Northeast increased 6.1 percent to 97.8 in December, and is now 15.3 percent above a year ago. In the Midwest the index decreased 1.1 percent to 103.6 in December, but is still 3.6 percent above December 2014. Pending home sales in the South declined 0.5 percent to an index of 119.3 in December but are 1.0 percent higher than last December. The index in the West decreased 2.1 percent in December to 97.5, but remains 3.4 percent above a year ago.



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The National Association of Realtors®, "The Voice for Real Estate," is America's largest trade association, representing 1 million members involved in all aspects of the residential and commercial real estate industries. For additional commentary and consumer information, visit www.houselogic.com and <http://retradio.com>.

➤ **LOCAL REAL ESTATE MARKET STATISTICS** → January was pretty steady, with showings, calls and re-listings. People really do look at properties in the winter! Some people want to see what it's like in the winter so they are prepared for living here. Good idea. **The Southwest Montana Multiple Listing statistics** for the Madison Valley area (including Ennis, Cameron, McAllister, Norris, Virginia City, Harrison, Pony, Whitehall, and Cardwell), for the month of **January 2016** are as follows:

- **LAND: 290** vacant lots are listed (\$1,500 to \$925,000); **9** pending sales (\$7,000 to \$299,000); and **3** lots sold in 2016 (\$49,000 to \$90,000), totaling \$147,000, which was 84% of asking prices.

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- **HOMES:** 97 homes are listed (\$65,000 to \$2,950,000); 8 pending sales (\$22,500 to \$567,000); and 2 homes sold in 2016 (\$349,000 to \$350,000), totaling \$699,000, which was 93% of asking prices.
- **RANCHES:** 5 listed (\$485,000 to \$9,950,000); 0 pending sales, and 0 ranches sold in 2016.
- **COMMERCIAL:** 23 listed (\$56,000 - \$2,950,000); 0 pending sales; and 1 commercial property sold in 2016 (\$585,000), which was 98% of asking price.

“The best investment on Earth is earth.” Louis J. Glickman, real estate mogul/philanthropist

➤ **YOU KNOW YOU'RE FROM MONTANA....***when you can answer most of the questions on the Go To Quiz on Montana at http://www.gotoquiz.com/how_native_montanans_are_you.* Like, *“What’s the name of the 400 mile long area way up north along US Highway 2, from around Cut Bank or Shelby, east past Malta to over by Glasgow and Wolf Point? Answer: The Highline. This is a fun quiz to take and you can actually learn a lot about Montana, if you don’t happen to be a native!*

➤ **MONTANA TRIVIA** → *Did you know... that in 1939 a group of business and political leaders tried to break off parts of Montana, Wyoming and North Dakota to form a new state? Well, they certainly did! The state would have been called Absaroka and it would have become the 49th state. It is also the name of a mountain range that runs between Montana and Wyoming. The movement resulted in the crowning of a Miss Absaroka, a minor league baseball team and briefly they printed their own license plates. Absaroka also refers to a mountain range near the eastern boundary of Yellowstone National Park. Read more about this story at: http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/24/us/24wpa.html?_r=0.*



SEE YOU IN MONTANA!



Don & Toni Bowen, Broker Associates and Accredited Buyer Representatives, with over 75 years of real estate experience, between them - covering residential, commercial, vacant land & ranch properties in the Madison Valley. We are in the business of "match making."



Office manager,



Debbie Reilly-Richardson



Ron Gay, Sales Associate with ERA Landmark Arrow Real Estate

*Thank you in advance for your personal referrals.
They are the lifeblood of our business and the greatest compliment you can give us.*

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USEFUL WEBSITES TO REMEMBER→

ENNIS AND THE MADISON VALLEY:

<http://www.ennismontana.org/> - for community and local government information
<http://www.ennischamber.com/> - The Ennis Chamber of Commerce website
<http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org> – The Madison Valley History Association website
<http://www.mvmedcenter.org> – for information about the Madison Valley Medical Center
<http://www.mvmcf.org> – the Madison Valley Medical Center Foundation website
<http://www.mvvetsmemorial.org> – The Madison Valley Veterans Memorial website
<http://www.madisonvalleyexpeditions.com/> - a source for experiencing *authentic* Montana in our area
<http://www.backroadtoyellowstone.com> – information for travelers about the route through our valley

MADISON COUNTY:

<http://madison.homestead.com/index.html> - for Madison County emergency news
<http://www.madison.mt.gov/> - Madison County Government website
<http://virginiacity.com> – Virginia City Chamber of Commerce

NEWS:

<http://www.madisoniannews.com/> - the latest news from the Madisonian newspaper for Madison Co.
<http://bozemandailychronicle.com/> - news from the big city of Bozeman, an hour northeast of Ennis
<http://www.mtstandard.com/> - news from historic Butte, an hour & ½ northwest of Ennis

MONTANA:

www.fwp.mt.gov/ - Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks website – for hunting and fishing regulations
<http://fwp.mt.gov/education/bow/> - “Becoming an Outdoors Woman” – a must for female newcomers!
<http://www.visitmt.com/> - Official website Montana Vacations, Recreation, Accommodations and Travel
<http://www.montanapictures.net> – for people homesick for Montana – a great visual connection
http://mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/weather/rwis_list.shtml - State Highway Web Cams
<http://montanakids.com/> - State website for all things KIDS in Montana
<https://www.facebook.com/Ennisrealestate?ref=hl> – Facebook page for ERA Landmark Arrow R. E.

SKIING:

<http://bigskyresort.com/> – Check out latest snow conditions & things to do at Big Sky
<http://www.lmranch.com/winter/> - Lone Mountain Ranch in Big Sky for cross country trails
http://www.westyellowstonenet.com/skiing/cross_country_skiing.php - Skiing Yellowstone Park Trails

HORSEBACK RIDING:

www.wolfpackoutfitters.com – trail riding guides for the Madison Valley
<http://www.sphinxmountainoutfitting.com> – trail riding and outfitting guides in the Madison Valley

RANCHING:

<http://www.madisonvalleyranchlands.org/> - working to keep the ranching way of life alive

FISHING:

<http://www.madisonriverfoundation.org> - The Madison River Foundation
<http://www.montanatu.org/> - Montana Trout Unlimited

GOLFING:

<http://www.madisonmeadowsgolfcourse.com> – Madison Meadows Golf Course in Ennis

REAL ESTATE:

www.arrowreal.com – A wealth of resource information, local listings and a portal to the SW MT MLS
<http://www.realtor.com/> - The world's #1 Real Estate website. The source for all properties on MLS
www.houselogic.com – Helpful information from the National Association of Realtors
www.trulia.com – Search for homes for sale and sold, local information, and research
www.zillow.com – Search for homes for sale and rent, home values and mortgage rates
www.homesandland.com – Search for homes for sale and rent, home values and mortgage rates

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